

Message Text

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PAGE 01 EC BRU 03192 102158Z

21

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-02 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 AGR-10 TAR-01 L-02 PA-02

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8635

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 523

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PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, EEC

SUBJECT: EC MOVES TO CORK FRENCH-ITALIAN WINE WAR

REF: (A) EC BRUSSELS 02905 (B) ROME 5065

1. ON APRIL 8 THE EC COMMISSION NOTIED FRANCE OF ITS INTENTIONS TO BEGIN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS, UNDER ARTICLE 169 OF THE TREATY, AGAINST THE FRENCH EMBARGO ON ITALIAN WINES. FRANCE HAS UNTIL APRIL 11 TO SUBMIT ITS VIEWS TO THE COMMISSION. IN THE EVENT THE COMMISSION CONSIDERS THE FRENCH RESPONSE UNSATISFACTORY, IT WOULD THEN SUBMIT TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT A "REASONED OPINION" ON THE EMBARGO. IF FRANCE FAILED TO COMPLY WITH THIS OPINION, THE COMMISSION WOULD APPEAL THE CASE TO THE COURT OF JUSTICE, PROBABLY UNDER "SUMMARY" (PRIORITY) PROCEDURES.

2. AS REPORTED IN REF. A, ITALY HAS ALSO BEGUN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS ON THE FRENCH EMBARGO.

3. FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST, THESE LEGAL MANEUVERS ARE SECONDARY TO THE DISCUSSIONS THAT WILL TAKE PLACE ON APRIL 15 WHEN THE COUNCIL

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PAGE 02 EC BRU 03192 102158Z

OF AG MINS TAKES UP THE WINE DOSSIER. APPROVAL BY THE COUNCIL

OF A LARGE-SCALE DISTILLATION PROGRAM WOULD BE THE KEY TO RESOLVING THE WHOLE ISSUE. THE QUESTION AT THE MOMENT IS THE WILLINGNESS OF UNWILLINGNESS OF THE OTHER MEMBER STATES TO FINANCE SUCH DISTILLATION.

4. LARDINOIS IS EXPECTED TO UNVEIL COMMISSION PROPOSALS FOR COPING WITH THE WINES SURPLUS BEFORE THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT THIS WEEK. PROPOSALS ON SHORT TERM MEASURES REPORTEDLY WILL CALL FOR UNLIMITED DISTILLATION DURING THE PERIOD JUNE 7 - JULY 31. THE COMMISSION ESTIMATES THAT ABOUT 5 MILLION HECTOLITERS OF WINE WOULD BE DISTILLED UNDER THIS PROGRAM. (THE COUNCIL HAS ALREADY APPROVED DISTILLATION SUBSIDIES FOR 4.6 MILLION HL.). FOR THE LONG TERM, LARDINOIS IS EXPECTED TO REFER TO THE COMMISSION PROPOSALS OF NOVEMBER 1974. THESE PROPOSALS PROVIDE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, FOR BEGINNING-OF-SEASON DISTILLATION, STRICTER CONTROLS ON PLANTINGS AND QUALITY, AND SEPARATE REFERENCE PRICES (MINIMUM IMPORT PRICES) FOR BOTTLED AND BULK IMPORTED WINES. GREENWALD

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